SCHOOL PROSPECTUS

St Clare's Abbey Primary School,

Nursery School

and

Educational Centre For Physical Difficulties (ECPD)

2021 - 2022

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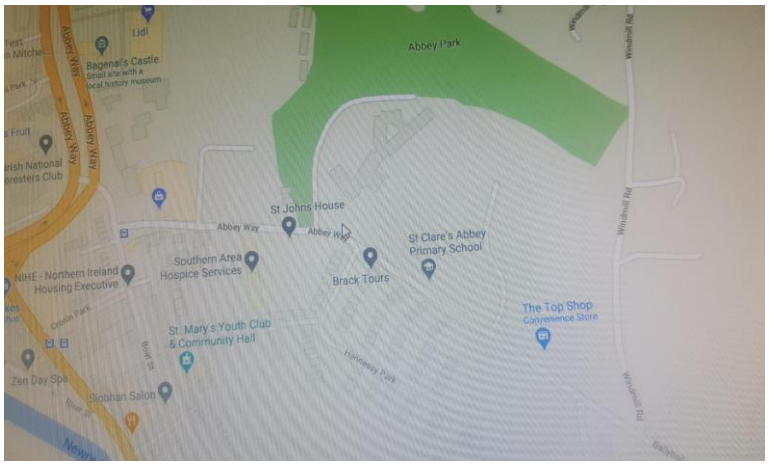


We are a school constantly striving to be the best that we can be.

See below some of the accreditations we have been awarded:

Address:
St Clare's Abbey Primary School and Nursery
12 Courtenay Hill
Newry
Co Down
BT34 2EA

Contact Number:
(028) 3026 2175

Website:
www.stclaresabbeyps.com

E-Mail:
mmonaghan771@c2kni.net

Principal:
Mrs Michelle Monaghan
M.Ed Management PQHNI

Chairman:
Canon Francis Brown Adm

Enrolment Number:
436 Primary School
52 Nursery School

Age Range:
3 years – Nursery
4 – 11 years – Primary School

Introduction

Welcome to St Clare's Abbey Primary School.

We are a relatively new co-educational school, created in September 2014, as a result of the amalgamation of St Colman's Abbey Primary School for boys and St Clare's Convent Primary School for girls.

As a catholic maintained school, we are influenced by the rich traditions of our founding schools and are guided by the teaching of Blessed Edmund Rice, St Clare and St Francis, which are summarized in our School motto:

'Amor Dei, Aliorum, Literarumque'

We hope that this Prospectus will give a good insight into the life of our School but urge you to refer to our school website and school 'app' for details.

www.stclaresabbeyps.com

Principal
Mrs Monaghan

Vice Principal
Mr Sweeney

Principal's Welcome

Dear Parent

I am delighted that you have taken the time to peruse our School Prospectus. It is a huge decision to make; selecting a school for your child, so hopefully, this will give you a little flavor of what we have to offer your family.

Please read it within the context of key items placed on our website to help parents at enrolment time.

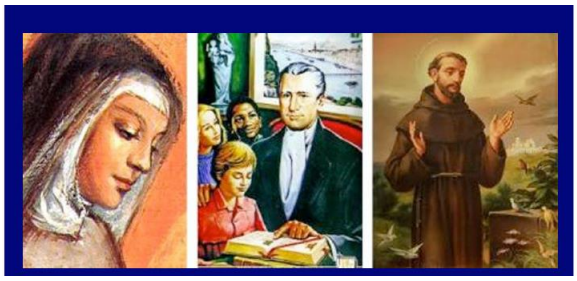
These include:

- Welcome video
- Welcome message from P7's to new pupils
- I-movies from P1 and Nursery Teachers
- Nursery Sub-section
- ECPD Sub-section

If after reading through the School Prospectus and viewing the website, you have any queries, please contact the School Office on 028 3026 2175.

Mrs Monaghan

Principal



Location

We moved into our new school building in March 2015. It offers a stunning 'rural' location in the heart of the city of Newry and has its very own 'woodland' on school grounds which we use to great effect.

We are also blessed with our modern facilities which include:

ECPD – Education Centre for Pupils with Physical Difficulties

Nursery – caters for morning and afternoon sessions – 52 children in total

School Uniform

P1-P7 Main School *(Uniform for Boys)*

- Navy trousers
- Royal blue and white striped shirt
- Royal blue tie
- Royal blue jumper with school crest
- Black shoes

P1-P7 Main School *(Uniform for Girls)*

- Navy pinafore (not skirt)
- Royal blue and white striped shirt
- Royal blue tie
- Royal blue cardigan (not jumper) with school crest
- Navy knee socks or navy tights
- Black shoes

ECPD Unit *(Boys and Girls wear the same uniform)*

- Navy sweatshirt tracksuit bottoms (straight legged ie uncuffed at ankle)
- These must be plain navy – branding logos will NOT be permitted.
- Royal blue sweatshirt top with school crest – St Clare's Abbey Primary School crest.
- Plain white polo shirt (no crest)
- Runners with Velcro fastening – any colour.

Nursery *(Boys and Girls wear the same uniform)*

- Navy sweatshirt tracksuit bottoms (straight legged ie uncuffed at ankle)
- These must be plain navy – branding logos will NOT be permitted.
- Royal blue sweatshirt top with school crest – St Clare's Abbey Nursery School crest.
- Plain white polo shirt (no crest)

School

Primary times are as follows:

Pupils are welcomed by teachers from 8.45 am.

Lessons begin at 9.00 am.

Lessons end at 2.00 pm for P1 – P3.
Lessons end at 3.00 pm for P4 – P7.

Break:
10.10 am – 1st break – 20 minutes
10.30 am – 2nd break – 20 minutes

Lunch:
11.50 am -12.30 – 1st sitting
12.20 – 1.00 pm – 2nd sitting
12.40 – 1.20 pm – 3rd sitting
(Under Review)

Nursery times are as follows:

Morning Session –

9.00 am – 11.30 am

Afternoon Session –

12.30 – 3.00 pm

Pre-School and After School Provision

Early bird activities are available from 8.15 am.

These can be booked on the school cashless system, as required by parents.

'After School Provision' from 2.00 pm – 3.00 pm is offered for pupils in P1 – P3 with siblings in Nursery or P4-P7.
Some additional places are available for pupils who require the provision for pastoral reasons .
It allows pupils to access a range of activities including:

- Outdoor fun and games
- Indoor fun and games
- Art
- Reading
- Curriculum practice

'After School Provision' from 3.00 – 4.00 pm offers pupils in P4 – P7 a wide range of opportunities including:

- Homework Club
- Numeracy Support
- Literacy Support
- ICT Support
- Art
- Drama
- Gaelic
- Camogie
- Coding

These are offered in six week blocks at key points throughout the year.

Healthy Food Policy

Pupils in Nursery and Foundation Stage (P1 and P2) enjoy healthy snack prepared by School Staff. Peer influence encourages children to try a wide range of foods which are enjoyed in a sociable manner whilst providing pupils with an opportunity to develop self-help skills.

All other pupils participate in the Health Trusts 'Boost Better Breaks' initiative and bring their own fruit or simple bread based snacks to school. At key celebrations, 'fruit parties' are provided for pupils to reinforce the message that eating healthily can also be fun.

Pupils are asked to bring a bottle of water to school each day. This remains on child's desk and ensures that hydration is maintained throughout the day.

Midday Meal Options

Packed lunch from home. These are eaten in the school dining hall with the child's Classroom Assistant supervising. It is a lovely sociable part of the day which allows staff a chance to monitor lunchbox contents.

If your child has a food intolerance or allergy or is unable to eat certain foods for cultural reasons, please let the school office know

School meals provided in our beautiful dining hall. The committed Canteen Staff provide appealing, varied, nutritious meals. The wonderful supervisors help pupils with table manners and self-help skills.

Our Motto into Practice

As a Catholic Maintained School, we are influenced by the rich traditions of our founding schools and are guided by the teaching of Blessed Edmund Rice, St Clare and St Francis, which are summarized in our School motto:

'Amor Dei,

Aliorum,

Literarumque'

'Loving God

Loving Others

Loving Learning'

This sums up the ethos and core business of our

St Clare's Abbey Primary School

Amor Dei Aliorum Literarumque

– Loving God

We are a faith school and cherish the role we play in helping your child to develop his/her Catholic faith and daily relationship with God. Together we:

- Pray daily in class, in the dining hall and in the playground.
- Enjoy weekly assemblies.
- Make use of prayer spaces throughout school and celebrate pupils' prayer intentions.
- Prepare our pupils for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation.
- Celebrate the Liturgical year together as a school.
- Enjoy School Masses.

We know that loving God goes beyond the experiences listed above and is very much at the core of our being as a School community, reflected in how we interact with each other as adults and children. It is a very enriching part of our community.

Come and see it!

Helping others that need our help

– Loving Others

We are deeply committed to developing our pupils socially and offer them endless opportunities to develop the skills and attributes they will need to 'get on' with others.

We all sign up to an agreed code – In St Clare's Abbey, we try out best to be:

- Gentle
- Fair
- Generous
- Well-mannered
- Hardworking
- Honest

We have a host of pastoral policies devised with our whole school community. These include:

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Policy for Promoting Positive Behaviour
- Child Protection Policy
- Substance Abuse Policy
- E-Safety Policy and many others.

All are available for perusal on the website or in hard copy from the school office.

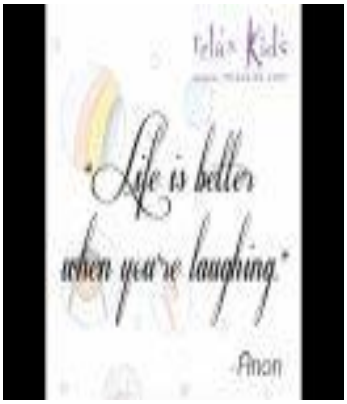
These, in conjunction with the work our staff undertake every day to develop the pupils' PDMU (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding) result in very well behaved, responsible pupils of whom we are extremely proud.

We have a wonderful nurturing programme for pupils with emotional needs including

- 'Sunshine Room'
- Roots of Empathy Programme
- Gardening Club
- Relax Kids
- 'Listening Service' from a trained Counsellor.

We have endless opportunities for our very precious pupils in the ECPD to integrate with their peers in other classes. This promotes respect, acceptance, celebration and loving understanding throughout our school and makes St Clare's Abbey very special.

We also work on a Cross Community basis with Educational Partners from Nursery through to Post Primary and have established many of these links via our work with the Community Education Partnership and Newry & Mourne Extended Schools Cluster (NAMES).



- Loving Learning

We work incredibly hard to make the delivery of the NI Curriculum fun, as we firmly believe that children learn better when they are fully engaged. The school website shows how this translates into reality for each of our pupils, please have a look

Our work with SEN pupils has featured in good practice recordings displayed on the Department of Education's website

Within St Clare's Abbey, we pride ourselves on our dedication to making the curriculum accessible for pupils with 'Additional Educational Needs'.

The SEN Policy available on the website gives an insight into this and parents are very welcome to discuss this with the Principal and SENCO at any time.

It is a high priority in our school.

We have a strong programme for digital home school learning. It is based around an app called 'Seesaw'. It allows teachers to upload recordings of pupils at work and play which their parents receive on their own devices. Many parents have commented on how lovely it is to receive a little snippet of their child in action, whilst they, themselves, are in work, at home, out shopping etc.

Our systems enabled us to make a smooth transition to online learning during the recent Covid 19 lockdown.

We value Home School Partnership and try to engage parents in their children's learning.

The website (Parents' Section) showcases this well and reference should also be paid to the Homework Policy stored therein.

Curriculum

In terms of practical arrangements, school is organised in the following learning scopes:

- Nursery
- Foundation Stage – Primary 1 and 2
- Key Stage 1 – Primary 3 and 4
- Key Stage 2 – Primary 5, 6 and 7

The Nursery Curriculum is very much play-based around the following areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Language Development
- Early Mathematical Development
- Physical Development
- The Arts

Awareness of the World Around Us (WAU)

Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2 develop learning in age appropriate ways in the following areas:

- Language and Literacy
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- The Arts (Music, Drama and Art)
- The World Around Us (Science, History and Geography)
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (Mentioned in the Loving Others Section)
- Physical Development and Movement

In addition, the Cross Curricular Skills of:
Communication, using Mathematics and using ICT are integrated through learning experiences.

Another aspect of the Curriculum is the interwoven 'Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities' of:

- Thinking, problem solving and decision making
- Self management
- Working with others
- Managing information
- Being creative

We are all extremely busy in St Clare's Abbey.

A recent audit undertaken with P7 pupils and their parents showed very clearly that both groups felt that St Clare's Abbey had definitely created pupils who loved God, others and learning.

Learning through Play

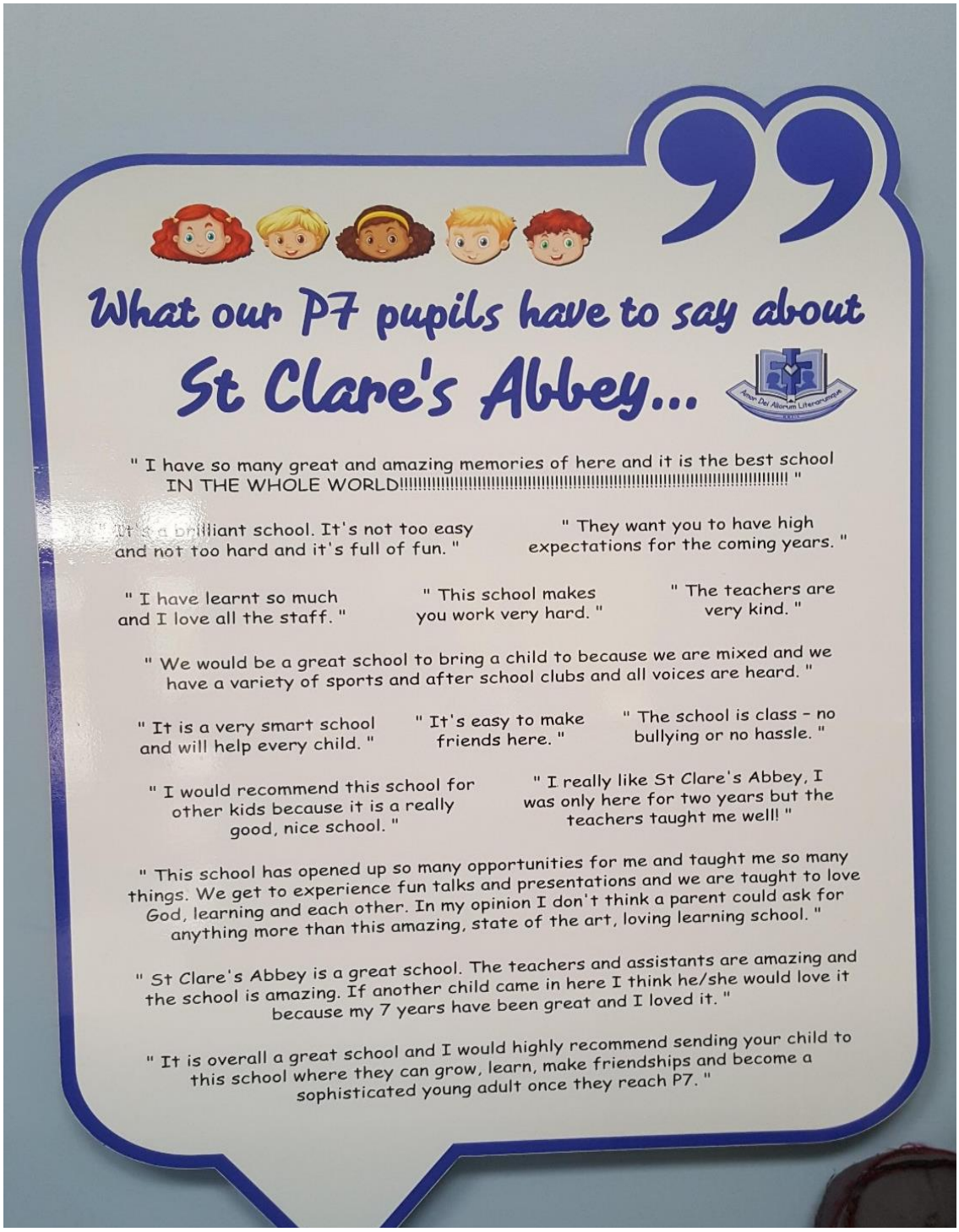
A key part of your child's learning will be the play-based learning experience.

Our work in this field featured in a programme broadcast across the world.

'Early Childhood Global' – Spotlight Show.

Please refer to the 'Children' tab on the website and the folder therein entitled 'Learning Through Play'

What our P7 Pupils Say . . .



What our P7 pupils have to say about

St Clare's Abbey...

" I have so many great and amazing memories of here and it is the best school IN THE WHOLE WORLD!!!

What our Parents Say . . .

Some thoughts from the families of our P7 ECPD leavers . . .

"St Clare's Abbey ECPD is absolutely fantastic!! Miss O'Shea and all the staff of ECPD couldn't do enough for my son or any child within their class."

"My child's confidence has grown so much since he joined St Clare's Abbey. He has been involved in so many different extra-curricular activities eg School Council, football team, choir, feis, Peace Proms, school plays where he has met so many great friends. He loved everything he was involved in and they all have had a positive impact on him. Although a shy child he is now happy to have a go at anything."

"The staff made everything seem so easy for my son. He also felt that he could ask the ECPD team anything. He just loved the ECPD in St Clare's Abbey School."

"My son learned so much through his reading, writing, numeracy, all of which were tailored to his individual capability. He was given so much encouragement and praise with all his work, which has given him great confidence going forward for all his learning for the future."

"The school building and ECPD suite has all the facilities you would ever need. It is so modern and has plenty of space, it is also extremely clean."

"I would highly recommend St Clare's Abbey to anyone, definitely a home from home experience for my child. He has now so much confidence, great people skills and many, many friends. He will miss everyone though he will have so many special memories. A fantastic school and amazing staff!!"

"ECPD was a home to home experience, just like a wee family unit."

"My child was treated as an equal to all other students within the whole school."

"Miss O' Shea and the staff in the ECPD are exceptional. Your child will be well and truly looked after by them."

"The access to therapy was exceptional. Therapy sessions were given weekly along with weekly feedback from Miss O'Shea, which was then followed up by a phone call from therapist after school hours. Contact details were also given to parents to access therapists if ever needed."

"I am sad that my child is leaving the ECPD as he loved every minute of his time in there."

Quotes from parents re Home School Learning during 'Lockdown.'

"St Clares Abbey have been fantastic and they could not do anymore, the teachers are always there to help if we get stuck on something or don't understand it."
"The work that was sent home was paced appropriately, the teachers were always at hand through the messenger on the seesaw app (it was actually really nice to have that weekly contact with the teachers and know that you could send any queries/questions) …"
"I felt the weekly feedback from teachers on my son's work gave him a huge incentive to continue to work hard. The weekly principals update also helped parents in a difficult situation."

At the end of each year we audit our P7 parents to establish whether our aims had been translated into practice for their child during his/her years with us . . .

Outcome of June 2020 Parents' Audits

We aim to help our pupils to 'Love God'. Did we succeed in this for your child?
100% parents replied yes and cited examples of how we have done this

I love the prayerful part of St Clare's Abbey. The sacraments are always so special, the choir is amazing. The May procession is lovely with Mr Byrne playing the guitar and all the children and grown-ups singing. It's a very Holy School.

"We felt our child's faith was enhanced in school, there was always great focus on all religious holidays and the meaning behind them . Preparation for the sacraments was brilliant, but most importantly the daily prayers helped to show that God is always listening"

"My child always talks of how school prays for his Grandpops when he was sick."

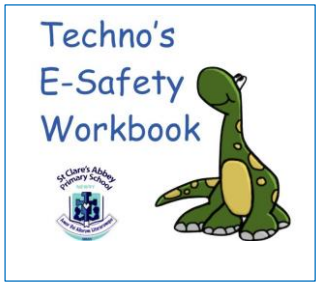
The parents of our P7 pupils were asked
'Regarding our aim to help our pupils to 'Love others'. Did we succeed in this for your child?'
96.77 % parents replied yes and cited examples of how we have done this

"I think that this is a strength in St Clare's Abbey. From my experience when things go wrong there is a lot of chat attached to solving the problem and trying to get the child to see it from the other child's point of view as well as their own. I am a big fan of that approach as it reflects the life skills that we all need"

"My child had a hard time with a few friends, Mr Sweeney sorted it and made sure by checking in that it remained sorted"

"I think that the role of helping with younger children throughout P7 is very good. As well as teaching the children how to be responsible, it also taught them to see how hard it can be to help wee ones to play kindly and fairly, an invaluable lesson. I can't praise this enough"

"K has matured into a beautiful, well mannered, empathetic child and without a doubt St Clares Abbey had a big impact on this. 'Cracking the Code' emphasised kindness. Asking P7's to care for younger children, prefect duties and Eco Council"



"You helped my child to grow socially through Bullying Campaigns, Yard Mentoring, teaching them to respect their school and environment. Instilling manners and courtesy"

My child was helped to socialise by school by "Offering a wide variety of sports teams. Integrating with less able children and people from different cultures.
Respect, manners were always pushed"

"My child has grown and developed socially and morally during her time in St Clare's Abbey. She has developed in her ability to deal with defeat and throughout her schooling she has been given much needed guidance assisting her in developing social skills necessary for establishing friendships"

The parents of our P7 pupils were asked:
Regarding our aim to help our pupils to 'Love learning' - did we succeed in this for your child?
96.5 % parents replied yes and cited examples of how we have done this

"To help him love learning . . . Mathletics App ... they visually see their input and rewards and school uploads certificates on Seasaw... fantastic encouragement!"

"As well as the theoretical approach to learning my childs development was enhanced by practical methods such as

outdoor activities, learning through nature, using recycled materials to build and create, visits to museums and other informative places"

"Extra support was given with understanding of my child's struggles that also didn't put too much pressure on her."

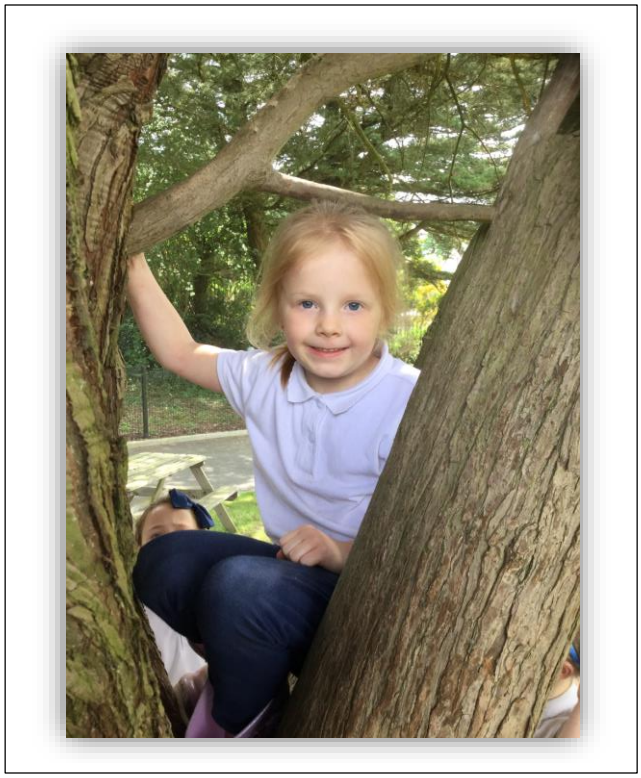
"My child is bright and whilst in the early days I might have been eager to get extra work, I left it to the teachers and the end product in my mind is first class. My child is entering grammar school with a level of writing ability that I know from my older child would be appreciated in year 9"

"I cannot credit you enough for all the work you did to improve K....'s reading, she now can't put a book down and we are truly thankful for this"

"You helped my child to love learning when you encouraged reading and reading activities in things that the young person was interested in which in turn made learning interesting"

"My child struggled with Reading but got so much help from Mrs Toner and everyone in school and now loves reading so much. I am so glad that we got all the help that we did"

Conclusion



Having read our Prospectus, if you need further guidance, please feel free to contact school on:
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or by e-mail to
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We would love to have your child join us!